

MINISTER WALLACE ISSUES REMINDER RE FORESTRY AND THE SINGLE PAYMENT SCHEME

Mary Wallace T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture and Food, today reminded farmers planning to afforest land in the coming 12 months to include their forestry plans in their Single Payment Scheme application. "Farmers planning to avail of the Afforestation and Forest Environment Protection Schemes can maximise their gain from forestry by making the appropriate declarations now," the Minister said.

Under the Single Payment Scheme, farmers must declare on their SPS application the lands that will be committed to arable or forage only over a nominated 10-month period. Where a farmer plans to afforest land, this area must be excluded from the 10-month arable/forage declaration.

"Farmers should remember that up to a total of 50% of the holding may be planted under forestry while continuing to enjoy the benefit of a full complement of entitlements. This is a significant concession to forestry enterprise and should be acted upon," the Minister said. A Consolidation of Entitlements application form is available with the SPS application form and should be returned with the SPS Application no later than the 4th May.

The Minister reminded farmers that free and independent advice on all forestry matters is available from Teagasc and encouraged farmers to avail of these services to ensure that farmers could benefit fully from the opportunities offered by the SPS and forestry schemes.

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Department of Agriculture and Food